

**REMARKS**

The above amendment and these remarks are responsive to the Office Action of 11 Feb 2003.

Claims 1-15 are in the case, claims 4-13 having been withdrawn from consideration pursuant to applicants' election in response to the Examiner's requirement for restriction.

***Specification***

Applicants have amended the specification to provide serial numbers for related patent applications.

***Restriction/Election***

The Examiner has required that the case be restricted under 35 U.S.C. 121, as follows:

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|           |                      |
|-----------|----------------------|
| Group I   | Claims 1-3 and 14-15 |
| Group II  | Claims 4-6 and 13    |
| Group III | Claim 7              |
| Group IV  | Claims 8 and 12      |
| Group V   | Claims 9-11          |

Applicants elect Group I claims 1-3 and 14-15 with traversal, and request that this restriction requirement be reconsidered and withdrawn with respect to Groups I, III, IV and V.

The Examiner states that these inventions are distinct as having acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification. While this may be, applicants feel that the subject matter of all claims in Groups I, III, IV and V are sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one group of claims would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining claims. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the search and the examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP Section 803, in which it is stated that "if the search and examination of the entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits".

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Applicants respectfully submit that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicants and duplicate examination by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

Applicants urge that the restriction requirement be withdrawn at least with respect to Groups I, III, IV and V, and that at least claims 1-3 and 7-15 be examined in the present application.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attachment is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

Applicants urge that the above amendments be entered, the restriction requirement be withdrawn, and the case be passed to issue with claims 1-15.

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conversation with applicant(s) attorney could possibly

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facilitate prosecution of the case, he may be reached at the number noted below.

Sincerely,

Jean-Paul Chollon, et al.

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